

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

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Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear ~~coating~~  
~~a shoe~~ comprising an upper and a sole, said method comprising:

- assembling the upper on the sole;
- applying at least one layer of flexible or semi-rigid polymer in a liquid state in  
predetermined areas of the upper, said predetermined areas constituting less than an entirety of  
the upper;
- drying the article of footwear.

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Claim 2. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear ~~coating~~  
~~a shoe~~ according to claim 1, wherein said applying of the polymer comprises applying the  
polymer with a brush.

Claim 3. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear ~~coating~~  
according to claim 1, wherein said applying of the polymer comprises applying the polymer by  
spraying.

Claim 4. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear ~~coating~~  
according to claim 1, wherein said applying the polymer comprises applying the polymer so as  
to straddle the upper and the sole.

Claim 5. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear coating according to claim 1, further comprising diluting the polymer in a solvent.

Claim 6. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear coating according to claim 1, further comprising liquefying the polymer by heating.

Claim 7. (*Currently Amended*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear coating according to claim 1, wherein the polymer comprises one of the following polymers: latex, polyurethane, PVC, silicone, polyamide, synthetic rubber, thermoplastic-base impact polystyrene.

Claim 8. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear ~~A shoe~~ comprising:  
an upper and an outer sole, said upper being assembled on said sole;  
at least one layer of flexible or semi-rigid polymer having been applied in a liquid state to coat predetermined areas of the upper, said predetermined areas constituting less than an entirety of the upper, whereafter said polymer ~~polyer~~ is allowed to dry.

Claim 9. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear ~~A shoe~~ according to claim 8, wherein the polymer layer comprises a strip applied to said upper and said outer sole to simultaneously straddle said upper and said outer sole.

Claim 10. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear ~~A shoe~~ according to claim 9, wherein the polymer comprises one of the following polymers: latex, polyurethane, PVC, silicone, polyamide, synthetic rubber, thermoplastic-base impact polystyrene.

Claim 11. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear ~~A shoe~~ according to claim 10, wherein the upper comprises a mesh material.

Claim 12. (*Currently Amended*) An article of footwear ~~A shoe~~ according to claim 11, wherein the upper comprises a three-dimensional ~~tridimensional-type~~ mesh material.

Claim 13. (*New*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear, said method comprising:

assembling an upper onto an outer sole, said upper comprising an aeratable material, said aeratable material of said upper having an outer side and an inner side;

applying at least one layer of a liquid polymer to less than an entirety of said outer side of said aeratable material of said upper to thereby allow ventilation through said aeratable material after completion of manufacture of the article of footwear;

drying said article of footwear.

Claim 14. (*New*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear according to claim 13, wherein:

said aeratable material comprises a three-dimensional mesh material, said three-dimensional mesh material comprising a pair of spaced-apart layers of mesh fabric and an elastically compressible air space between said pair of spaced-apart layers.

Claim 15. (*New*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear according to claim 13, wherein:

said aeratable material comprises a three-dimensional mesh material, said three-dimensional mesh material comprising a pair of spaced-apart layers of mesh fabric and a fibrous layer between said pair of spaced-apart layers.

Claim 16. (*New*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear according to claim 13, wherein:

wherein said applying at least one layer of a liquid polymer to less than an entirety of said outer side of said upper comprises applying said polymer to create a polymer layer having an upper edge extending along a line varying in height along a length of said upper.

Claim 17. (*New*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear according to claim 16, wherein:

said upper edge of said polymer layer rises in height at least along a rear of said upper.

Claim 18. (*New*) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear according to claim 13, further comprising:

applying said at least one layer of said liquid polymer to less than an entirety of said sole, whereby said layer of liquid polymer covers a junction between said upper and said sole.

Claim 19. (New) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear, said method comprising:

assembling an upper onto an outer sole, said upper comprising an aeratable material, said aeratable material of said upper having an outer side and an inner side;

applying at least one layer of a liquid polymer to said outer side of said aeratable material of said upper to create a polymer layer having an upper edge extending along a line varying in height along a length of said upper;

drying said article of footwear.

Claim 20. (New) A method of manufacturing an article of footwear according to claim 19, wherein:

said upper edge of said polymer layer rises in height at least along a rear of said upper.

Claim 21. (New) An article of footwear comprising:

an outer sole;

an upper affixed to said outer sole, said upper comprising an aeratable material, said aeratable material of said upper having an outer side and an inner side;

at least one layer of a polymer covering less than an entirety of said outer side of said aeratable material of said upper to thereby allow ventilation through said aeratable material.

Claim 22. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:

said aeratable material comprises a three-dimensional mesh material, said three-dimensional mesh material comprising a pair of spaced-apart layers of mesh fabric and a fibrous layer between said pair of spaced-apart layers.

Claim 23. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:

said aeratable material comprises a three-dimensional mesh material, said three-dimensional mesh material comprising a pair of spaced-apart layers of mesh fabric and an elastically compressible air space between said pair of spaced-apart layers.

Claim 24. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:

said at least one layer of a polymer comprises an upper edge extending along a line varying in height along a length of said upper.

Claim 25. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 24, wherein:

said upper edge of said polymer layer rises in height at least along a rear of said upper.

Claim 26. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:

said at least one layer of polymer also covers less than an entirety of said sole, whereby said layer of polymer covers a junction between said upper and said sole.

Claim 27. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is latex.

Claim 28. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is polyurethane.

Claim 29. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is PVC.

Claim 30. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is silicone.

Claim 31. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is polyamide.

Claim 32. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is synthetic rubber.

Claim 33. (*New*) An article of footwear according to claim 21, wherein:  
said polymer is a thermoplastic-base impact polystyrene.

Claim 34. (New) An article of footwear comprising:

an outer sole;

an upper affixed to said outer sole, said upper comprising an aeratable material,  
said aeratable material of said upper having an outer side and an inner side;

at least one layer of a polymer affixed to said outer side of said aeratable material  
of said upper, said layer of polymer having an upper edge extending along a line varying in  
height along a length of said upper.

Claim 35. (New) An article of footwear according to claim 34, wherein:

said upper edge of said polymer layer rises in height at least along a rear of said  
upper.

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